(c) Several changes in trade policy were introduced since July 1991 aimed at strengthening export incentives, eliminating a substantial volume of import licensing and rationalising the import tariff structure. In the Budget for 1992-93, rupee was made partially convertible to encourage generation of foreign exchange and export of value added items. These have been further consolidated in the new Export-Import Policy announced on 31st March, 1992 and revised on July 1, 1992, which, *inter-alia*, aims to promote the productivity, modernisation and competitiveness of Indian industry and thereby to enhance its export capabilities. The Government has also announced a 5-point Action Plan for boosting exports during 1992-93. These include formation of a national plan for export promotion of 34 commodities identified as "Extreme focus sectors", launching of a National Quality Awareness Programme, one to one meeting with export houses and leading industrial houses, launching of a world wide effort to revamp our external commercial representations, improve external publicity and undertake export promotion for our products in 40-50 select countries, reorganisation of the Office of Chief Controller of Imports and Exports from the present form of a regulatory authority to a promotional body, etc. Besides, the Government has taken other steps which include reducing controls through licensing, simplification of procedures for export, activisation of Board of Trade, bilateral discussion with select countries, interaction with national organiations of Trade and Industry.

In so far as sector specific measures are concerned, it may be mentioned that capital goods have been made freely importable, without any restrictions in the new policy. Second hand capital goods are allowed to be imported without a licence for certain specified sectors including Garments / Hosiery / Madeups; Leather Processing / Leather Finishing / Leather goods manufacturing / Leather Apparel manufacturing; sports goods; Forged hand tools; Sea foods, etc. Special export promotion schemes have also been formulated for export of gold and silver jewellery, as a part of the new Export and Import Policy. However, it may be mentioned that export of agro-based items like sugar depend on the availability of surpluses for export.

Export of farm products

@485. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what was the share of farm products in total exports during the year 1991-92;

(b) what are the principal items exported from the farm sector;

(c) whether it is a fact that export of agricultural products have resulted in scarcity in the domestic market, causing hardship to the commonman; and

(d) whether Government propose to discourage the export of agricultural products commonly used by poor sections?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) and (b) Important farm products being exported from India at present are cereals, fruits and vegetables, sugar, cashew, tobacco, spices, dotton, oilmeals etc. According to the provisional figures of exports published by DGCI & S, exports of these farm products amounted to approximately Rs. 4,600 crores during 1991-92, out of the total export from India of Rs. 43,823 crores.

(c) and (d) Export of items of mass consumption, such as wheat, rice nad sugar are subject to ceilings fixed, having regard to surpluses available after meeting domestic needs.

@Previously Unstarred Question 257, transferred from the 10th July, 1992.